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DELTA CONSERVANCY

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March 7, 2011

DRAFT

The Honorable Edmund Gerald Brown Jr.
Governor
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Delta Conservancy), I wish to thank you for your continued support for the Delta Conservancy as we move forward in fulfilling our mission to serve as a primary state agency to implement ecosystem restoration in the Delta and to support efforts that advance both environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents (PRC Sec. 32322).

I also wish to acknowledge the support of the Secretary Laird of the Natural Resources Agency. Secretary Laird has been a great asset to the Delta Conservancy and we welcome him as a fellow board member and advocate for our organization.

In this first year of its existence, the Delta Conservancy has held 10 board meetings and several subcommittee meetings resulting in the recent completion of an interim strategic plan, two years ahead of the statutorily-mandated deadline. This was completed under the direction of an acting executive officer with a small staff of four working in borrowed office space from the Department of Water Resources. The Delta Conservancy recently appointed its permanent executive officer, who came on board March 7, 2011.

To maintain the positive momentum that the Delta Conservancy is developing, we submit this request to you to approve an increase in our baseline budget by \$300,000 and include this change in your May revision of the State's budget.

As a result of consultation with the Department of Finance (DOF) and the Natural Resources Agency (Resources Agency), the Delta Conservancy submitted a Spring Finance Letter (SFL) for FY 2011-12. In the SFL, we request



\$300,000 from the Environmental License Plate Fund as a permanent increase to our budget. In developing the SFL, we determined what our most basic and critical needs will be for fiscal year 2011-12 that are not covered in our current budget. These needs include leasing permanent office space in the legal Delta, fulfilling our mandates related to developing and adopting a strategic plan, to building partnerships with and supporting efforts in the local Delta communities and to secure additional help to address the multitude of tasks associated with organizing a new state agency. We believe the amount requested in our SFL is very reasonable considering the extent to which it will benefit our organization and allowed us to fulfill our statutory mandates.

We have worked diligently over the last nine months both on our own and in conjunction with the Resources Agency, DOF, and the Delta Stewardship Council (Council) to explore all possible options for securing additional funding for this organization. To date we have met with very limited success. The Council has agreed to provide some funds and services through the end of fiscal year 2011-12 to assist with strategic plan development and with administrative and IT support. While this provides for some of our needs over the near-term it is not permanent and does not include or adequately cover basic needs such as leasing office space. At DOF's suggestion, the Delta Conservancy has asked the Council for additional funding for basic operating costs, including the lease for the permanent office space, and our request was denied.

Although SBX 7 1 is silent as to the division of funds for the Council and Delta Conservancy, it does state:

It is the intent of the Legislature to finance the activities of the Delta Stewardship Council and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy from funds made available pursuant to [Proposition 1E, 2006] and [Proposition 84, 2006].

To date, the Council has maintained control of all funding, and the Delta Conservancy is in the position of requesting funding from the Council for its needs.

We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

MARY NEJEDLY PIEPHO, Chair
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy

cc: Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Board Members